

Digital Dilemma: A Technical Exploration of Social Media Addiction Prevalence in College Students

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ABSTRACT

Social Media platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram have many avenues for engaging people who have common interests. In 2020, there were about 3.6 billion social media users worldwide and the number is ratcheting daily. Social media addiction is a form of internet addiction characterized by problematic use of social media by people of all ages, including adolescents. The objective of the study is to know the level of social media addiction of college students and to appraise how it is important for college students besides assessing their eagerness in using the same.

The study was carried out on 241 college students as respondents. It is a quantitative study with a suitable questionnaire used. The major findings of the study are that more than one-third of respondents agreed with the statement of looking for internet connectivity everywhere to go on social media. And more than half of the respondents have low social media addiction. However, less than half of the respondents are highly addicted to social media.

Keywords: College Student, Digital Device, Social Media Addiction, Technology, Youth

Introduction

Social networking is a digital device-based internet communication technology. According to Boyd and Ellison (2007), social media is "a public web-based service that enables users to build a personal profile, recognize other users with whom they can relate or have a relationship, read and respond to posts made by other users on the network, and send and receive messages either privately or publicly." Social media addiction is a term used to describe a condition in which a person spends an inordinate amount of time on social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram). It harms the various facets of his / her

everyday life, such as education, jobs, or various social obligations and relationships with others (Walker, 2011). Social Media is centered on the internet, and social media addiction is a form of internet addiction that is characterized by the unhealthy use of social media by people of all ages, including teens. According to a new report, there are recurrent online manifestations of offline activities such as intimidation, clique formation, sexual experimentation, and privacy concerns. Such problems that should be addressed include internet addiction and concurrent sleep loss. Both of the above factors inevitably contribute to mental health problems in teens. (Pavlicek, 2013) It was discovered that a social media addict is someone who has an excessive urge to use social media engaging in habits such as regularly monitoring status messages and posts or stalking the accounts of other users for long periods interferes with his / her daily duties such as family, education, job, and so on.

Objectives

- To know the level of social media addiction of college students
- To appraise how social media is important for the college students
- To assess the prevalence of social media addiction among college students

Review

Vishwanath (2015) studied habitual Facebook usage and its effect on social media. As per the results, individuals who often use Facebook, retain a massive social network and are defective in their capacity to control those activities

Chouhan and Joshi (2018) youth use more social media than teenagers and have a lower degree of well-being. Males were shown to be more addicted than females.

Muflih & Amestiasih (2018) In teenagers, the association between social media addiction and social health catastrophe risk variables was found to be negligible. According to the report, social media access may have both positive and negative consequences.

Khan (2018) The rise of social networking sites such as Facebook, Myspace, and others has been discussed. It created an online forum for users from all over the world to remain more connected by communicating and sharing content, creating accounts, navigating other users with whom they shared mutual interests, and so on. Individuals' heavy usage of these social

networking sites, on the other hand, resulted in compulsive behaviour that reached the level of psychiatric addiction.

Awasthi and Verma (2017) Internet-addicted students (both males and females) have more mental health issues than non-internet addicts and surprisingly, female internet users were found to have more mental health issues than male addicts.

Bashir and Ahmad (2017) The young generation has been stated to be at a greater risk of severe mental health issues as a result of their excessive use of social media.

Krylova (2017) There are many possible causes of depression that can be traced back to the use of social media. Envy, disturbing news, exclusion, negative posts, opposing views and cyber bullying, spending too much time on social media, and remembering memories are some of them. Overall findings confirmed that social media resentment is a possible cause of depression.

Walker (2016) A social media addict is someone who tends to use social media excessively, continuously monitor messages and statuses and waste too much time on Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and other types of social media. Social networking addiction is not officially recognized as a condition or illness by the medical community.

Pareek and Vandana (2016) To measure mental well-being, a positive and negative impact schedule was applied to a group of regular and infrequent WhatsApp users. The results revealed a substantial gap between frequent and infrequent users, indicating that frequent users were more addicted to WhatsApp than their counterparts.

Vishwanath (2015) studied habitual Facebook usage and its effect on social media. As per the results, individuals who often use Facebook, retain a massive social network and are defective in their capacity to control those activities.

Mekinc et al. (2013) Increased internet use, Facebook accounts, and the publication of personal details are symptoms of internet addiction among upper-level graduates. Using Facebook increases the likelihood of developing an internet addiction. Teenagers can fulfill their desire for interaction by using the internet to form new friendships and socialization. Excessive use of social networking sites raises the possibility of creating internet addiction.

Methodology

A descriptive research design was adopted by the researcher which helped the researcher to describe the social media addiction of college students. The study was carried out on UG students of Sacred Heart College (Autonomous) situated in Tirupattur, Tamil Nadu. Samples were collected from 241 respondents consisting of males (119) and females (122). Simple Random sampling was used to collect the data, with the help of an appropriate questionnaire. The researcher prepared the tool and data analysis was done using SPSS 21 version

Findings

Table -1 I am eager to use social media

S. No.	I am eager to use Social media	Frequency (n:241)	Percent
1.	Strongly Disagree	26	10.8
2.	Disagree	66	27.4
3.	Neither agree or disagree	81	33.6
4.	Agree	53	22.0
5.	Strongly Agree	15	6.2
Total		241	100.0

From the above table, it is evident that more than one-fourth (27.4%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement of eagerness to use social media, and one-tenth of the respondents strongly acknowledged the same. Less than two-fifths (22.0%) of the respondents agreed that they were eager to use social media and a few (6.2 %) strongly agreed with the same. However, one-third (33.6%) of the respondents remained neutral regarding the statement.

Table – 2 I look for internet connectivity everywhere so as to go on social media

S. No.	I look for internet connectivity everywhere so as to go on social media	Frequency (n:241)	Percent
1.	Strongly Disagree	23	9.5
2.	Disagree	71	29.5
3.	Neither agree or disagree	69	28.6
4.	Agree	70	29.0
5.	Strongly Agree	8	3.3
Total		241	100.0

As observed from the above table, it is evident that more than one-third (29.0%) of respondents agreed with the statement of looking for internet connectivity everywhere to go on social media. A meager (3.3%) number of the respondents strongly agreed with the same. However, more than one-third (29.5%) disagreed with the statement of constantly checking their smart phones so as not to miss conversations between other people on Twitter or Facebook/ WhatsApp. Less than one-tenth (9.5%) of the respondents strongly acknowledged the same. While more than one-third (28.6%) of the respondents remained neutral in their statements.

Table -3 Going on social media is the first thing I do when I wake up in the morning

S. No.	Going on social media is the first thing I do when I wake up in the Morning	Frequency (n:241)	Percent
1.	Strongly Disagree	44	18.3
2.	Disagree	67	27.8
3.	Neither agree or disagree	48	19.9
4.	Agree	62	25.7
5.	Strongly Agree	20	8.3
Total		241	100.0

Drawing inferences from the above table, it is understood that more than one-fourth (27.8%) disagreed with the sentence that going on social media is the first thing to do when they wake up in the morning. Less than two-fifths (18.3%) highly agreed concerning the same. More than one-fourth (25.7%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that going on social media is the first thing to do when they wake up in the morning and less than one-tenth (8.3%) highly agreed with the same. Also, less than two-tenth (19.9%) took a neutral stand.

Table – 4 I do not even notice that I am hungry and thirsty when I am on social media

S. No.	I do not even notice that I am hungry and thirsty when I am on social media	Frequency (n:241)	Percent
1.	Strongly Disagree	47	19.5
2.	Disagree	84	34.9
3.	Neither agree or disagree	59	24.5
4.	Agree	29	12.0
5.	Strongly Agree	22	9.1
Total		241	100.0

On observing the above table, it is clear that one-third (34.9%) of the respondents disagreed with the sentence that they do not even notice that they are hungry or thirsty when going on social media. Less than two-fifths (19.5%) of them strongly agreed based on the same. More than one-tenth (12.0%) of respondents agreed with the statement that they do not even notice that they are being hungry and thirsty while going on social media.

Table - 5 Overall Social Media Addiction

S. No.		Frequency (n:241)	Percent
1	Overall Social Media Addiction		
	Low	137	56.8
	High	104	43.2

As per the presented table, it is understood that more than half (56.8%) of the respondents have low social media addiction. However, less than half (43.2%) of the respondents are highly addicted to social media.

Suggestion and Recommendations

- ❖ Being on social media, one can get up-to-date information about friends and family.
- ❖ Try to create a real-world connection with one's friends and family rather than social media.
- ❖ Set a timer on your Smartphone to limit the amount of time one spends on social media.
- ❖ Create physical distance between oneself and digital devices.
- ❖ Don't give importance to one's personal social media appearance.
- ❖ Inculcate reading habits which can reduce the use of social media.
- ❖ Engage in a hobby that can promote health and well-being

Conclusion

Now – a - days, social networking does not necessarily refer to what we do, but who we are. Social networking can arguably be considered a way of being. It taps into very fundamental human needs by offering the possibilities of social support and self-expression. Hence taken on a positive note, social media will improve teenage life by encouraging them to

communicate with friends and family and share important events in their lives. However, if not treated correctly, it may develop into an obsession that consumes their time and interferes with their jobs and relationships. With the ubiquity and proliferation of mobile technologies, nomophobia and its attendant problems have come to stay with the youngsters. Keeping a tap on social media, measuring one's unbridled addiction, and cultivating healthier social media behaviour will help one to progress towards a more productive life.

Most of the time, people log into their social media sites regularly for trivial reasons or worse still to waste time. They just search their account and see if there is any feedback and to see how many viewers and likes they have. Another critical aspect of social media is that users log in to where they have been. They begin to post updates on social media about their everyday lives, such as getting dinner outdoors, pictures of important people and locations they have visited, and so on. They assume that telling others about their daily lives or sharing images on social media is one of their social responsibilities. As a result, teenagers need to be trained and made mindful of the positive and negative aspects of social media.

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Research paper

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